



Iowa Outdoors

Iowa Department of Natural Resources
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TREES AND SHRUBS FOR WILDLIFE HABITAT AVAILABLE THIS SPRING

Bird watchers, hunters and nature enthusiasts understand that habitat created by trees and shrubs is critical to wildlife survival in Iowa.

“Planting one tree gives some benefits, but a diverse planting of trees and shrubs give the greatest benefits to the most wildlife,” said John Walkowiak, chief of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources’ forestry bureau. “We are offering low cost Songbird and Wildlife packets of hardy trees and shrubs to the general public. We are getting lots of calls from the general public, and this is something we felt was needed to meet their demand.”

The Songbird Packet has 2 bur oaks, 2 white pine, 4 wild plum, 4 chokecherry, 4 gray dogwoods and 4 serviceberry plants. The packet costs \$20, which includes shipping, for the 8 to 24-inch bareroot seedlings. This packet was developed in cooperation with the Audubon Iowa.

For the landowner with two to five acres, there are three special wildlife packets. Each packet has 200 trees and shrubs and costs \$90. The General packet has 50 white pine, 50 bur oak, 50 redoisier dogwood and 50 highbush cranberry. The Turkey packet, developed in cooperation with the Iowa Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation, has 50 bur oak, 50 red oak, 50 pin oak and 50 gray dogwoods. The Pheasant packet developed in cooperation with Iowa Pheasants Forever, has 50 redcedar, 50 wild plum, 50 ninebark and 50 gray dogwood.

Finally, a special Quail packet containing 100 wild plum and 100 gray dogwoods is also available.

To order Songbird or any of the Wildlife packets, contact the State Forest Nursery at Ames at 1-800-865-2477 or go on line to www.iowadnr.com/forestry/. The State Forest Nursery staff will confirm your order and bill you. The packets will be delivered to a central point in your county in early to mid-April.

For more information, contact Walkowiak at 515-242-5966 or by e-mail at john.walkowiak@dnr.state.ia.us.

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Outdoor Notes: SHOOTING RANGE HOURS SET AT BANNER

INDIANOLA – The winter shooting hours at the shooting range at Banner Lakes at Summerset State Park are 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Friday through Tuesday. The range is closed Wednesdays and Thursdays. The range will be open later, as the days get longer.

NONRESIDENT ANTLERLESS LICNESES SOLD OUT

DES MOINES – The 2,500 nonresident antlerless deer only licenses are sold out, which includes the special holiday season, Dec. 24 to Jan. 2.

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IOWA FISHING REPORT

For the week of December 28, 2004

www.iowadnr.com

Ice fishing reports will be released every week while quality ice conditions exist.

Northwest

Ice conditions vary from 12 inches on Spirit Lake to 10 inches in Little Emerson Bay on West Okoboji. Lakes in north central Iowa have 7 to 10 inches of ice.

Spirit Lake (Dickinson): Yellow perch are biting at the north end using perch eyes and small minnows. Crappies, bluegills and perch are biting at the North Grade around the lily pads. Crappies, perch and bluegills are taking teardrops and wax worms in 8 to 10 feet of water in Anglers Bay.

West Okoboji (Dickinson): Bluegills are fair in Millers Bay, Little Emerson Bay and Emerson Bay. Smith's Bay is getting a lot of attention from anglers.

East Okoboji (Dickinson): Some anglers are ice fishing in front of Parks Marina.

Center Lake (Dickinson): Anglers are catching 8 to 10-inch crappies off the north boat ramp.

Lake Pahoja (Lyon): Crappie and bluegill fishing is excellent, but the fish are small. This would be a great opportunity to introduce someone to ice fishing. There is lots of action, but the fish are small.

Winterfield Pond (Sioux): Anglers are catching crappies, bluegills and bass around the island using minnows and wax worms.

Trumbull (Clay): Yellow perch are biting, but sorting is required for keepers.

Clear Lake (Cerro Gordo): Walleye fishing is good. Jigging spoons and minnows are both producing fish. Fish the sunrise or sunset times for best success. Remember the 14-inch minimum length limit on walleye. Yellow bass are being caught northeast of the Island, Farmer's Beach and Billy's Reef. Small spoons and minnows are producing the best. White bass are being caught in the same areas as the yellow bass.

Blue Pit (Cerro Gordo): Trout are being stocked on Dec. 28. Fish with tube jigs and small jigging spoons for best results. The trout tend to cruise just below the ice, so try different depths.

Upper Pine (Hardin): Bluegill fishing is good using wax worms and small jigs.

Silver Lake (Worth): Yellow perch fishing is good around the jetty and the campground using minnows. Sorting is required, but 7 to 9-inch fish are available.

Little Clear Lake (Pocahontas): Anglers are catching yellow perch on teardrops with wax worms or live minnows.

Black Hawk Lake (Sac): A few crappies are being caught, but fishing is fairly slow. Live minnows work best. Ice is 8 inches thick. The aerators will be started on Dec. 28 in Town Bay.

Arrowhead Lake (Sac): Fishing is fair to good for nice sized bluegills using teardrops and wax worms.

Brushy Creek Lake (Webster): The bays are covered by about 5 inches of ice. Bluegill fishing is good on the north end. A few crappies and walleyes are also being caught.

For more information on fishing in northwest Iowa, call the regional office in Spirit Lake at 712-336-1840.

Southwest

Ice fishing is just beginning. With the recent freeze up, ice conditions have been variable, from 6 inches of ice on farm ponds to 4 inches on small lakes. However, some of the larger lakes just froze over late last week. It is strongly advised to remain cautious and to test the ice before venturing out.

Southwest Iowa Farm Ponds: Excellent for bluegill and crappie on wax worms. Most have at least 6 inches of ice.

Big Creek Lake (Polk): Bluegill fishing has been reported as good during the day. Teardrops and wax worms in the Lost Lake area near the spillway. Crappie fishing has been good late in the day in the Lost Lake area using rocker jigs and minnows.

Green Valley (Union): Bluegill and crappie can be caught around some of the deep cedar tree piles on wax worms. Ice conditions vary from 8 inches to open water.

Three Mile (Union): Some bluegill and crappie are being caught near the creek channel at the upper ramp on wax worms. Ice is clear but can be less than 4 inches in places.

West Lake Osceola (Clarke): Some ice fishing activity is starting. Some bluegill can be caught on the outer edges of the deep flooded timber or near the mouth of the cove west of the main ramp. Ice conditions vary from less than 4 inches to more than 7 inches.

Orient Lake (Adair): Bluegill can be caught on wax worms. Ice is more than 4 inches in most places.

Lakes to consider, if ice conditions are safe, for good pan fish include **Mormon Trail** (Adair), **Littlefield** (Audubon), **Mile Hill** (Mills), **Beaver** (Dallas), and **Badger Creek** (Madison).

For more information on fishing in southwest Iowa, call the regional office in Lewis at 712-769-2587.

Southeast

Lake Odessa (Louisa): Ice thickness varies. Anglers are picking up a few crappies in the lower end of Sand Run.

Lake Geode (Henry): Unsafe ice.

Lake Darling (Washington): Highly variable ice conditions. Ice thickness goes from 4-1/2 inches along the edges to one-half inch or open water in the middle of the lake.

Lake Belva Deer (Keokuk): Ice is roughly 2 to 3 inches thick; last Thursday, the lake had open water by the dam. A few anglers went out over the weekend and reported fishing was slow.

Washington and Keokuk County Ponds: Smaller, wind-protected ponds have about 4 to 5 inches of ice. Success has been spotty. Bluegills are near the deep-water habitat on the bottom. Crappies are about one to two feet above the bottom.

For more information on fishing in southeast Iowa, call the regional office in Brighton at 319-694-2430.

Northeast

The beginning of the second week of suitable ice fishing conditions on Pools 9 through 11 of the Mississippi River is underway. In general, the angling has been quite good with many bluegills reported at multiple locations. In nearly all locations anglers are using teardrop type lures with wax worms or spikes. In **Pool 9**, good angling can be found in the New Albin area just off Army Road. Popular lakes include Cordwood Lake, Fish Lake and Bear Paw. Bluegill and occasional crappies are also being caught. Nearer to Lansing, anglers have been having some success in Conway Lake and Shore Slough.

In **Pool 10**, anglers are targeting the Spillway Area, Joyce Lake and Mud Hen Lake near Harpers Ferry. These lakes have been producing some nice bluegills and an occasional crappie. On the Wisconsin side, areas near Wyalusing State Park have been good for bluegills but some sorting may be required for acceptable sized fish. Moving down river and back on the Iowa side, areas near French Island have been good for bluegills and crappies but you will need an airboats or hovercraft to reach them. Near

Marquette and McGregor the fishing has been good in Norwegian Lake and Methodist Lake. **Note:** Use extra caution when crossing over Wyalusing Slough to get to Methodist Lake. Ice conditions in Wyalusing Slough are always temperamental and crossing it should never be taken for granted. Finally, Bussey Lake has been receiving heavy fishing pressure with many anglers reporting good catches.

In **Pool 11**, anglers at Bertom Lake, south of Cassville, Wis., reported catching some bluegills but size has been small. Some other ice fishing locations in Pool 11 include Swift Slough (Guttenberg) and Mud Lake (Dubuque) but no reports have been confirmed from these areas.

In addition, tailwater sauger and walleye fishing is still available at the Guttenberg and Lynxville dams. Launching access is available at both areas and fishing pressure has been light with only a few sauger reported. Call the local bait shop or Iowa or Wisconsin DNR offices for up-to-date local conditions. Finally, also remember that Mississippi regulations have changed for bluegill and sauger in recent years. Consult the 2005 Iowa Fishing Regulations book and update yourself on the new laws.

Ice fishing in **Pools 12-15** is fair to good. The ice thickness ranges from 2 to 8 inches; however, check before entering. Some areas in these pools have only been iced over since Dec. 25. Fish Trap and Kehough in **Pool 12** are good for bluegill and some crappies. In **Pool 13**, anglers are catching bluegill and crappie in Lower Brown's Lake, Scarborough, Green Island, Middle and Lower Sabula lakes, Spring Lake and Michelson. Rock Creek, in **Pool 14**, is also good for bluegill and crappie. Non-resident anglers are reminded that they need to carry an Iowa non-resident fishing license to fish Green Island.

Ice fishing is beginning to pick up in area lakes in **Black Hawk County** for bluegill and crappie.

For information on fishing in northeast Iowa, call the regional office in Manchester at 563-926-3276.

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